

South Dakota State University

## Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange

---

SDSU Extension Leaflets

SDSU Extension

---

12-1-1956

### Clothing the Family for Comfort and Safety

Cooperative Extension South Dakota State University

Follow this and additional works at: [https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension\\_leaflets](https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_leaflets)

---

#### Recommended Citation

South Dakota State University, Cooperative Extension, "Clothing the Family for Comfort and Safety" (1956). *SDSU Extension Leaflets*. 189.

[https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension\\_leaflets/189](https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_leaflets/189)

This Pamphlet is brought to you for free and open access by the SDSU Extension at Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in SDSU Extension Leaflets by an authorized administrator of Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact [michael.biondo@sdstate.edu](mailto:michael.biondo@sdstate.edu).

SDSU LIBRARY - BROOKINGS, SD



3 1574 50153 7887

AL LIBRARY

Brookings, South Dakota

# CLOTHING THE FAMILY

## For Comfort and Safety

by Anna D. Walker

*Extension Clothing Specialist*

**AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE  
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE COLLEGE  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

630.732

S087

No. 182

e. 1

# CLOTHING THE FAMILY

## For Comfort and Safety

by Anna D. Walker

*Extension Clothing Specialist*

Clothing plays an important part in the lives of all of us. Clean, attractive, well cared for, comfortable clothing contributes to the feeling of confidence and self respect of each family member. Appropriate clothing helps him develop poise and self-assurance and thus to adjust easily to his environment.

In this leaflet let us consider two of the factors which are important to consider in clothing the family, ie: comfort and safety.

### IT'S SMART TO BE COMFORTABLE

A well-dressed family is one which is comfortably dressed. Let us interpret the word "comfortable" in its broadest sense, and say that clothing can be uncomfortable in two ways, physically uncomfortable and mentally uncomfortable. A garment which fits poorly may be both; a garment which is of a color strongly disliked by the wearer may irritate mentally; a fabric which is rough and scratchy is irritating to the skin; some styles which make the wearer feel foolish or conspicuous may be physically comfortable yet mentally uncomfortable. Clothing which is not entirely clean may be mentally irritating to even the smallest member of the family.

#### The Physical Factor

There are a number of ways in which a garment may be physically uncomfortable to the wearer. It may be too heavy, too bulky, not warm enough, too warm or poorly fitted so that it hinders free movement of the body, either by being too loose or too tight.

Some specialists in child care point out the need for research to determine, to some extent, the weight of clothing a child can



carry in proportion to his own weight and strength. The careful mother will consider this factor when selecting clothing for winter weather.

Often winter clothing is too thick and bulky for comfort and action. Several layers of light weight clothing will give better warmth than one of heavier fabric, since the layers of air between garments serve as insulators. If the outer layer is water repellent and wind resistant, the inner layer can be of lighter weight knitted or woven napped material. Knitted or woven napped materials which are used for outer garments should have a closely woven or knitted back to give good protection against wind and cold.

Ease in cut and comfort in design are features to look for in children's clothing. Too tight trousers, straps that are continually slipping down and similar uncomfortable features interfere with a child's work and play. Good children's clothing should help a child to forget himself.

### **The Mental Factor**

Wearing what the other boys and girls wear is important to children because in doing so they gain self-confidence and feel a part of the group. This should be considered within reasonable limits, of course.

Over-dressing can be a problem. The little girl whose mother dresses her in expensive furs and other foolish luxuries is set apart from her playmates, and regardless of how cute she appears, she is not in the best sense of the word "well-dressed."

Buying clothing which is much too large, in the hope that the child will grow into it before it wears out, is a questionable practice because the child never experiences the joy of wearing a new, well-fitted garment. During a period of rapid growth, it may be smarter to buy fewer, less expensive garments to be worn oftener until they wear out. Well planned make-overs may fill a need at this stage, too. (See Extension Leaflet—"New Clothes From Old.") Later, with careful planning of design and "let out" features, some garments may be worn a second year.

Too many pieces to keep track of or clothing which causes much concern about its care may mean less freedom for a boy or girl in developing a well-rounded, out-going personality. The mother who is continually saying "Don't play ball at recess because you will get your clothing soiled or torn" may need to ask herself if her school child's wardrobe is characterized by good design, sturdy materials and simple construction so that he is appropriately and comfortably dressed and yet ready for school and play.

Since a good many hours a day are spent in a house dress, by the mother of a family, this dress should be gay, colorful and comfortable. The design of a house dress can mean the difference

between the comfort and freedom which a good design offers and the discomfort of a poor one. The ideal house dress has complete freedom from pulling and binding of sleeves, shoulders or neck. It has no unnecessary fullness, pleats, dangling ties or belts that may catch on projecting objects. It has pockets placed at a good level. It is easy to put on and take off and is easy to launder. A pattern with a bias underarm section which gives stretch for reaching has been designed and tested by groups of homemakers. Patterns which offer these features are available commercially. Look for them in the pattern books.

## IT'S WISE TO DRESS SAFELY

Yours is not a well dressed family unless the safety factor has been considered in clothing selection. Let's think of a number of ways in which clothing contributes to the safety of the family.

The mother who dresses her children in bright colored outer clothing need not fear the traffic hazards caused by motorists failing to see a child walking by the roadside or on the highway. Small strips of reflecting tape stitched to caps, mittens and jackets would further protect the child if he is walking at dusk when car lights are on.

The story of the little girl who wandered away and was lost in the tall brush along a creek had a happy ending because a mother with imagination had sewed a small tinkling bell to her parka hood.

Functional work clothes for all family members is important to safety. Trousers with cuffs, gloves with two thumbs, dangling apron strings and loose clothing in general, may and do cause accidents while the wearer is working around machinery.

If an overall is too long so that it has to be turned up into a cuff, it is a wise precaution against trippings to stitch the cuff down securely by machine.

Untied shoe strings and shoe strings which are too long can cause tripping accidents, too.

The practice of wearing out dress shoes for work about the house may lead to accidents which could have been avoided. Comfortable shoes for work and play contribute to the comfort and safety of all family members.

Since farm and home fires take many lives each year, something can be said for fire proofing certain garments for the family. Some children's outer clothing to be worn during the season of bon-fires in the fall could well be fireproofed. Coveralls and other outer garments worn by the men of the family when fighting prairie or forest fires might also be fire proofed. This is especially important for cotton fabrics and other fabrics which catch fire easily. Wool fabrics catch fire less readily. Fire proofing does



not make the treated materials 100% fire proof, but effective fire proofing does prevent the spread of flame and thereby removes the fire hazard.

### Fire Proofing Garments

Fire proofing treatments that can be applied to washable garments in the home are very simple. The method consists merely in dissolving the right amount of a fire proofing substance in a specified amount of water and saturating the fabric with the solution. Some garments may be treated by dipping them into the solution. They may then be put through a wringer or wrung by hand. It is best not to treat fabrics which are wet as the moisture present in the garment will dilute the fire proofing solution.

If it is not desirable to dip the article to be fireproofed it can be hung up, sprayed with the solution and allowed to hang until dry. Some water repellent, closely woven or heavily sized fabrics may not absorb the fireproofing solution readily. This difficulty can be overcome by adding a small amount of detergent to the solution. Add just enough soap or synthetic detergent to form a suds with moderate stirring. For effective fire proofing the fabric should be thoroughly saturated. Garments which have been fireproofed should not be pressed with too hot an iron. A satisfactory and inexpensive formula for fireproofing is as follows:

Borax—7 ounces

Boric acid—3 ounces

Hot water—2 quarts

Simply stir the borax and boric acid into the water until it is dissolved and a clear solution results. This solution is not injurious to the hands. This solution is easily washed out so is not effective when the garment is exposed to rain or after it is washed. Garments should be re-treated after each washing.

### Beware of Explosive Solvents

Home dry cleaning of garments with explosive solvents such as gasoline is a practice which is never recommended.

There are some non-explosive solvents on the market which are sold for this purpose. However, all of them are toxic to some extent and should always be used in a well ventilated room or out of doors. It is a better practice for safety's sake to send clothes which need to be cleaned to a good dry cleaning establishment. If the budget won't stand too many dry cleaning bills, perhaps the family should plan to wear more washable garments.

## SUMMARY POINTS

With the suggestions we have offered in this leaflet to stimulate your thinking, look at your family's clothing with a critical eye. Is every member comfortable (mentally and physically) in their clothing? If not, would more careful planning remove the irritations which you can see? What hazards to health and safety could be removed?

The family's clothing should not be regarded so much as a separate part of life, but rather as a part of a whole, which has the maximum balanced development of every member as its object.

EXTENSION SERVICE, SOUTH DAKOTA STATE  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND MECHANIC  
ARTS, BROOKINGS, SOUTH DAKOTA

Published and distributed under Acts of Congress, May 8  
and June 30, 1914, by the Agricultural Extension Service  
of the South Dakota State College of Agriculture and  
Mechanic Arts, Brookings, George I. Gilbertson, Director.  
U. S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.